

REMARKS

Claims 7 – 11 are allowed. The Applicant appreciates the Examiner's attention in this matter.

Claims 2, 3, 5, 13, 14, 16 and 19 – 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 2 and Claim 2 has been canceled.

New Claim 22 corresponds to Claim 3, written in independent form. Claim 3 has been canceled.

New Claim 23 corresponds to Claim 5, written in independent form. Claim 5 has been canceled.

Claim 12 has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 13 and Claim 13 has been canceled.

New Claim 24 corresponds to Claim 14, written in independent form. Claim 14 has been canceled.

New Claim 25 corresponds to Claim 16, written in independent form. Claim 16 has been canceled.

Claim 18 has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 19 and Claim 19 has been canceled.

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New Claim 26 corresponds to Claim 20, written in independent form. Claim 20 has been canceled.

New Claim 27 corresponds to Claim 21, written in independent form. Claim 21 has been canceled.

Claims 1, 4, 12, 15 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kennedy et al. (US 5,517,686) in view of Heinemann (US 5,828,699).

Claims 1, 12 and 18 have been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter as set forth hereinabove. Claims 4 and 5 have been canceled.

An Information Disclosure Statement reflecting documents cited in a corresponding European patent application accompanies this Amendment. The applicant has reviewed the newly cited references and submits that none of them, alone or in combination with the references already of record, anticipates or obviates the claims as presently amended.

Inasmuch as all pending claims are indicated as allowed or allowable, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn in view of the forgoing amendments and remarks herein.

Conclusion

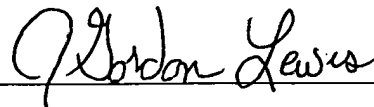
It is believed, in view of the amendments and remarks herein, that all grounds of rejection to the claims have been addressed and overcome, and that all claims are in condition for allowance.

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If it would further prosecution of the application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned at the phone number provided.

Please charge fee for the new claims any please charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0831.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "J. Gordon Lewis", is written over a horizontal line.

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Enclosures:

IDS Petition; 1449 and references